



info Prescription

Information prescription

Diabetes – questions and answers

Changes to medication

What does this mean for me?

Diabetes is a condition in which the amount of glucose (sugar) in the blood is too high because the body cannot use it properly.

You may have to make different food choices, become more active and lose weight, if you need to, as well as attend more doctor's appointments and you may need to monitor your glucose levels at home.

By keeping your blood glucose levels, blood pressure and blood fat levels to as near normal as possible can help you to live a full and active life.

Why has my medication changed?

Diabetes is a progressive condition and despite keeping to a healthy diet, physical activity and taking your medications regularly, your medications may need to be altered to keep your diabetes well controlled and to prevent the long term complications of diabetes.

What does the new medicine do?

The information about medication and what they do can be found on the Electronic Medicines Consortium (EMC) website. If you have questions about any of these products, concerns about individual health matters or the treatment of your diabetes, please consult your diabetes care team. The main types of medication are:

- Biguanide (Metformin). These work in two ways - help to stop the liver producing new glucose and it also overcomes insulin resistance by making insulin carry glucose into muscle and fat cells more effectively.
- Sulphonylureas.. These work by stimulating the cells in the pancreas to make more insulin. They also help insulin to work more effectively in the body.
- Prandial glucose regulator. These work by stimulating your pancreas to produce more insulin,
- Thiazolidinediones (glitazones). These are a new family of tablets which help the body to use its own insulin more effectively.
- Alpha glucosidase inhibitor. These work by slowing down the absorption of starchy foods from the intestine

These medications need to be taken in different doses and at different times of the day. Follow the instructions provided by your healthcare team or those printed on the front of the packaging.

What should I do if I experience side effects?

If you experience any side effects, do speak to your doctor as there may be another medication that could be used instead. If you think a medicine has caused an unwanted side effect, or even if you are not sure, you can report the problem to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) on a yellow card. Yellow card forms are available from pharmacies and other outlets across the NHS.

What should I do if I forget to take a diabetes medication?

If you forget and it is only an hour or two since your normal time for taking it, just take it as soon as you remember (apart from prandial glucose regulator tablets which should be taken within the first few minutes of your next meal). If longer, miss the dose out and take the next one at the usual time. If you find that you frequently forget to take your tablets, discuss this with your doctor. It may be possible to simplify your treatment. If not, there are various aids available which can help you remember when to take your tablets.

Do I need to notify the DVLA?

If you have diabetes that is treated with insulin, you must, by law, inform the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) as soon as possible after you have been diagnosed.

Do I need to eat snacks?

If you are taking certain diabetes medication, you may need to eat small snacks between meals to prevent hypos, particularly before bed. If you do need to eat snacks between meals, choose those that are low in fat, such as fruit or low fat yoghurt, to help prevent weight gain.

Help with translation

If you need support in your own language contact CITAS on 0845 521 0405. CITAS are a non-profit making organisation that provides interpreting and translation services in over 55 languages to local people accessing health, social services, housing legal and education services.

Help from Diabetes UK

Over 2 million people in the UK are diagnosed with Diabetes and a further 750,000 have the condition, but do not know it yet.

Diabetes UK is the largest organization in the UK working for people with diabetes, funding research, campaigning and helping people live with the condition.

With over 170,000 members Diabetes UK is the charity for people with diabetes, their friends and carers. Our mission is to improve the lives of people with the condition and to

work towards a future without diabetes by providing practical support, information and safety-net services to help people manage their diabetes.

Careline

The Careline is staffed by trained counsellors who can provide a listening ear and the time to talk things through.

0845 120 2960, Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm

(BT calls from landlines should cost no more than 4p per minute; calls from other providers and mobiles may vary. Alternatively, call 020 7424 1000 and ask Reception to transfer your call to the Careline.)

Website

www.diabetes.org.uk

What is an information prescription?

An Information Prescription is a handout which is being given to people with long-term conditions by their doctor, nurse or pharmacist to help and support them manage their own health condition.

This handout tells you where you can find more information and support, including a telephone helpline, where a knowledgeable and friendly person can give you more support and assistance. The handout also gives you details of this website, where you can find more information which will help you to control of your condition.

About us

We are a partnership of [Arthritis Care](#), [Asthma UK](#), and [Diabetes UK](#) working with [Hammersmith and Fulham PCT](#).

We are funded by the Department of Health to develop and test Information Prescriptions, informing the implementation of Information Prescriptions throughout the country.

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